



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Situation in Dorotscaia, Moldova

As delivered by Deputy Political Counselor, David Kostelancik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 21, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States is troubled by the ongoing, systematic harassment of Moldovan farmers from the village of Dorotscaia by Transnistrian authorities. These villagers farm land that is located in an area under the *de-facto* control of the Transnistrian authorities, who last year installed a "customs" post in the zone. The effect of this move has been to deny the villagers access to their farmland, and thus their livelihood.

Last year the entire harvest for this village was lost due to Transnistrian restrictions on the farmers harvesting the fields. This year, the harassment has continued, with reports that Transnistrian authorities have impounded tractors and detained farmers who are trying to plow and sow their fields.

We call on the Tiraspol authorities to cease this contemptible and needless persecution of these villagers. Depriving poor farmers of their livelihood is a despicable way to seek political advantage. The result is heightened tensions and the suspension by Moldovan authorities of their participation in the Joint Control Commission, or JCC.

The Tiraspol leadership should accept and immediately implement the terms of the preliminary agreement reached with the Moldovan side at the April 19th JCC, so as to allow the farmers to sow their crops before it is too late.

The United States calls on both sides to work urgently to resolve their differences through dialogue.

We also support Moldova's call for international observers to monitor the situation. We appreciate the April 20th spot report from the OSCE Mission to Moldova and welcome the Mission's intention to continue to closely monitor the situation. We look forward to further reports.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.